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DIGEST

OF THE

RULES AND USAGES

IN THE

ONSOCIATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

OF

CONNECTICUT.

REVISION OF 1861.

NEW HAVEN:
PRINTED BY E. HAYES, 426 CHAPEL STREET.
1862.

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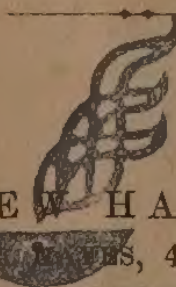

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PREFACE.

The first churches in New England were instituted without any other "platform" or constitution than the Bible. In the year 1648, twelve years after the settlement of Hartford, Windsor and Wethersfield, and ten years after the beginning of the New Haven Colony, a Synod of the New England churches was held at Cambridge. The result of that Synod was a summary of principles and rules found by them in the Scriptures and constituting their system of ecclesiastical polity. It was entitled, "Platform of Church Discipline, gathered out of the word of God, and agreed upon by the elders and messengers of the churches assembled at Cambridge in New England," and is commonly called the Cambridge Platform. It describes the Congregationalism which was then received and practiced in the churches of the Connecticut and New Haven colonies, as well as in the churches of Massachusetts.

In 1708, a Synod of delegates from the pastors and churches of Connecticut was convened at Saybrook by order of the colonial government, "to consider and agree upon those methods and rules for the management of ecclesiastical discipline, which by them should be judged agreeable and conformable to the word of God." That Synod commended to the churches of Connecticut, for their guidance in their internal self-government, the "Heads of Agreement" which had lately been drawn up and extensively approved in England as a basis of union between Congregational and Presbyterian dissenters from the established Church of England. It also drew up and commended to the civil government and to the churches fifteen "Articles for the administration of Church discipline," which were the outlines of a plan

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for the definite confederation of churches in local "Consociations," and of pastors in local "Associations," and a "General Association." The same Synod gave "a full consent and agreement unto the Confession of Faith assented unto by the Synod of Boston" in 1680—which was almost identical with that adopted by a Synod of English Congregational churches in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and denominated (from the name of the place in which its authors were assembled) the Savoy Confession. These three documents constitute what is commonly called the Saybrook Platform.

Of the Saybrook Platform there have been several editions, the first in 1709, published by the civil government of the Colony, the others in later years, under the direction of the General Association. To the last edition (1843), which was accompanied with the Cambridge Platform, and with a "Historical Account" by the Rev. David D. Field, and was illustrated by explanatory notes, there was appended a "Digest of Rules and Usages in the Consociations and Associations of Connecticut," prepared with much care by a committee of the General Association. The volume, printed from stereotype plates, is still in use; but "the rules and usages in the Consociations and Associations" have undergone so many changes in the course of twenty years, that a revision of the Digest was found necessary two years ago. Accordingly this revision having been made by a Committee was reported to the General Association at Bridgeport in 1861, and being approved by that body, is now published under their direction.

It will be understood then that the General Association, in causing this Digest to be made and published, assumes no right to legislate for the ministry or the churches. Nothing more has been attempted or proposed than to ascertain, classify, and arrange the "rules and usages" as they are at the present time; and this the Committee of Revision have done so carefully that it is hoped the result of their labors will facilitate the transaction of business in all our ecclesiastical and clerical assemblies.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY NEW YORK

PART FIRST.

OF CHURCHES.

I. The completeness of particular Churches.

The rights, powers and duties of particular churches are the basis of our ecclesiastical constitution. To none but the elder or elders of a particular church, with the consent of the brethren of the same, does it belong to exercise church discipline, to open and shut, to receive and reject, to excommunicate and to absolve from excommunication. (Heads of Agreement I; 6, 7.—Saybrook Articles I.)

II. The Communion of Churches.

1. Although churches are distinct and equal, yet all the churches ought to preserve church communion, one with another; and all ought to be most willing to give account of their church proceedings to each other, when desired, for preventing or removing any offences that may arise among them. (Heads of Ag. IV, 6).

2. The churches, confederated under our ecclesiastical constitution, do not by their confederation cease to be Congregational churches; nor do they part with any of the rights, powers and duties, which belong to them by Christ's institution. They only consent and covenant to exercise towards each other, under certain forms, that mutual communion which is their duty as churches of Christ; and particularly, *first*, by way of mutual care in taking thought for one another's welfare,—*secondly*, by way of consultation, one with another, in cases which require the judgment and counsel of other churches, —and *thirdly*, by way of admonition, to wit, in case any public offence be found in a church, in which case, if the church that lieth under offence be found obstinate, after due means used for its recovery, by a council or synod of neighboring churches, those neighboring churches, approving and accepting the judgment of the Council, are respectively to declare the sentence of non-communion concerning the offending church.*

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* These and other particular instances of church communion were distinctly defined by the synod at Cambridge in 1648. Such responsibility of churches to each other was well known and practically recognized in Connecticut long before the Saybrook Platform was framed. See Camb. Platf. XV: 2.

PART SECOND.

OF CONSOCIATIONS.

I. The matter of a Consociation.

1. A Consociation consists of the churches neighboring to each other within a certain district, (which is ordinarily either a whole or a part of a county,) with the elders or pastors, agreeing to practice church communion by affording to each other such assistance as may be requisite upon all occasions ecclesiastical. (Sayb. Art. II).

2. A church, proposing to unite with the Consociation, may be required to give satisfaction to other churches respecting the conformity of its faith and order to the pattern of the scriptures. (Heads of Agr. VIII).

II. The members of a Council of the Consociated Churches.

1. Every pastor of a consociated church is a member of the Council of the Consociation, (Saybr. Art. II). Nevertheless, if a pastor of a consociated church has been introduced into that office without the presence and con-

currence of the Council of the Consociation, such pastor cannot be obtruded upon the churches of the district, as a standing member of the Council, without their first obtaining by examination, or otherwise, as they shall see fit, satisfaction respecting his fitness for the work. In New Haven East Consociation, a minister, who has acted as stated supply for a year to one of the consociated churches, is admitted to a seat in the Council, while he continues in that relation.

2. The brotherhood of each consociated church is to be represented in the Council by a messenger (or delegate, as now commonly called) chosen for that purpose by themselves, according to the rules and usages of each particular church. (Saybr. Art. IX). Two delegates (with a single vote) are allowed in Tolland county, if the church have no pastor. In Fairfield East, Litchfield North and Litchfield South, delegates may serve until others are chosen, but in these districts, as elsewhere, a new choice is commonly made for each meeting of the council.

III. The officers of a Consociation.

1. The presiding officer of the Council is a Moderator, who in the Consociations of Fairfield East, New London, Tolland and Wind-

ham holds his office for a year, but in other districts is chosen for each meeting.

2. The Scribe, who writes the minutes of the proceedings, is also elected for a year in Fairfield East. In New London Consociation he is called Clerk. There may be two Scribes, if the business make it expedient.

3. The Registrar, who keeps the records, is usually a permanent officer. In most of the Consociations he acts as Treasurer. In New London county his office is merged in that of Clerk.

IV. Meetings of the Council.

1. In each Consociation an annual meeting is held at a time and place previously agreed upon. In this annual Council, the pastors and delegates commonly assemble without any special summons; but in Fairfield East the Registrar, in Hartford North the Moderator, and in Hartford South a committee appointed for the purpose, give notice to each church of the annual meetings of the Council.

2. The Moderator of the last session of any Council shall, with the advice and consent of two or more elders, (or in case of the Moderator's death, any two elders of the same Consociation) call another Council within the district, when they shall judge there is need thereof. (Saybr. Art. X). To this rule

there are exceptions. Thus in Fairfield East the Moderator may call a special meeting with the advice of one pastor, and must at the request of two. In Litchfield North the Moderator on written application of five members of the Consociation, may call extra meetings, and in case of his absence the senior minister has the same power. A church may also call the Council together. In Litchfield South special meetings may be called by the Moderator or by the joint letter of parties concerned in a proposed ordination or dismission, and it is made the duty of the Moderator to convene the body on written request from five members of the consociated churches. In New Haven East the Registrar acts in case of the Moderator's death, &c. In Hartford North, New Haven West, and New London, the same power is given to the "senior elder."

V. Business belonging to the Council.

1. In Fairfield, Litchfield and New Haven counties, the rules and usages of the Consociations require a Council of all the consociated churches to be called at the settlement of a pastor; and in Fairfield East, Fairfield West and Litchfield North, the same is re-

quired at his dismission, but in Litchfield South a select Council may act in the matter of dismission,—and so likewise in New Haven East, provided the Council be taken from the Consociation and there be no disagreement between pastor and church as to the expediency of the dismission,—while in New Haven West a majority of the Consociation must be called. In New London County the Moderator is authorized to call such churches from the Consociation (not less than six) as may be requested by the church and society concerned, to which his own church is always added to make up the council. In case of ordination, the church and pastor elect may invite one or two churches from without the Consociation. In New Haven East, other churches may in like manner be invited, but not so as to control the council. In Middlesex and Windham counties, the majority of churches invited must be from the Consociation: in Hartford and Tolland counties, councils are made up at discretion.

2. At the annual meeting the Council inquires into the state of religion in the churches of the district, enters into deliberation and gives advice concerning matters of common interest, and (when orderly applied to) gives advice to a particular church or to individual

members of the churches. In some districts the Council gives special attention to the benevolent operations of the churches, and either directly or through societies formed for that purpose, seeks to increase the spirit and practice of beneficence.

3. In case any difficulties arise in any of the churches, which cannot be issued without considerable disquiet, that church in which they arise, may before proceeding to sentence therein, or at any stage of the proceedings, apply to the Council of the consociated churches of the circuit to which the said church belongs, who, if they see cause, shall thereupon convene, hear, and determine such cases of difficulty. (Sayb. Art. VII, VIII).

4. When a consociated church has proceeded to the sentence of excommunication against a brother charged with any offence, such offending brother has liberty to call a Council of the churches of the Consociation to hear and determine in his case. (Sayb. Art. VII, VIII).

VI. The form of proceeding in cases of difficulty.

1. *The case of an offending Pastor.* In some districts, namely, Litchfield North, Middlesex, New Haven West, and Windham, no

complaint is entertained against a pastor, except on the presentation of the Associated Pastors of the district. (Saybr. Art. XIII.) In Fairfield East and Litchfield South, process may be begun by a member of that church or by another pastor, and a complaint may be laid before the Association, or may be brought directly to the Council, provided it be signed by five members of that church or by another pastor. In Hartford North, process may be begun by one or more members of that church; in the second step another pastor must join; then the case may come before the Consociation by written complaint of three members of the church, with a certificate of the pastor who assisted, that in his opinion the case demands attention. In Litchfield North, process must be begun by another pastor. In New London, a complaint against a pastor may be brought to the Moderator of the Consociation by any minister or church of that body after having used the proper private steps.

2. *The case of an offending Church.* In Fairfield East, process against a church may be commenced by a member of that church or by a pastor, who, failing to obtain satisfaction, may bring his complaint to the Council. The rule is substantially the same in Litchfield South;—also in Litchfield North

and New Haven East, except that one pastor and one member from another church are to assist in the second step. In New London, any minister or church in the body may present a complaint to the Consociation, if all private means have been first used.

3. *The organ of communication with the Council.* Any reference, complaint, or appeal to the Consociation, is to be put into the hands of the Moderator of the last Council, or of the person or persons empowered to act in his stead; except where the usage of the Consociation (in accordance with Saybr. Art. XIII) requires that a complaint against a pastor be carried to the Associated Pastors of the district.

4. *Citation.* It is the duty of the Moderator, or of the person or persons acting in his stead, to examine the reference, complaint, appeal or request put into his hands, and if he finds that it is in order, and that the case is one in which, according to the rules of the Consociation, a council is required, he is to issue, not only letters missive convening the Council, but also citations to the parties concerned, and, if requested, to the witnesses named by either party. The citation to a party complained of, or appealed from, must be accompanied by a certified copy of the complaint or appeal, and ought to be presented, unless the Consociation has some other

special rule, at least eight days before the time appointed for the trial of the case. In Middlesex and Windham Consociations, an accused pastor must receive notice at least one month previous to the time of trial. In Litchfield South, notice given to the church or to their Moderator of an appeal from their decision, is sufficient notice to the church to appear before the Consociation, at their next annual meeting, in answer to the appeal.

5. *Limitation of the right of appeal.* Written notice of an intention to appeal from the decision of a church must be given by the party appellant in New London county within two months,—in Fairfield East, Litchfield North and Windham within one month, and in Litchfield South within fifteen days after sentence is rendered.

6. *Censure of scandalous contempt.* If any person or persons orderly complained of to a Council, or that are witnesses to such complaints, (having regular notification to appear,) shall refuse or neglect so to do, in the place and at the time specified in the warning given, except they or he give some satisfactory reason thereof, to the said Council, they shall be judged guilty of scandalous contempt. (Sayb. Art. XI.) If any person, thus guilty of scandalous contempt, be a member of a church, that church ought to

deal with him as an offender: otherwise, the church becomes partaker of his sin.

VII. Method of voting in the Council.

The rule, according to which questions were anciently decided in Councils of the consociated churches, was that nothing shall be deemed an act or judgment of any Council, which hath not the major part of the elders present concurring, and such a number of the messengers present, as makes the majority of the Council. (Saybr. Art. IV.) In most of the Consociations this rule has become obsolete. In Litchfield South and New London, all questions are determined by a majority of the members present;—in Windham, by a majority of those voting. In New Haven West, two-thirds of the members present must concur to decide such weighty matters as those which relate to the discipline of the churches.

VIII. Result or decision of the Council.

The result or decision of the Council, whether it be called advisory, as in some districts, or authoritative as in others, is in all cases to be a final issue. That is, no other

council may be called to rejudge the matter: and in all cases, the church is to give effect to the decision of the Council, by accepting and acting upon it, or by submitting to it, as the case may require. And the Council, having seen their determination or judgment duly executed and attended, may put upon its records the evidence of the compliance of the church with the decision.

IX. The right of parties to be heard by counsel.

No person is permitted to appear as counsel for another before any Consociation, who is not a member of a Congregational church and in good standing. In New Haven East, no person who has made the pleading of law his professional business is admitted as an advocate, except he be a member of a church belonging to that Consociation; and members of that body, except in extraordinary cases, are not allowed as advocates. In New London no person is admitted as counsel; but the Consociation may designate one of its own members to present and examine witnesses in favor of one or both of the parties.

X. The union of two Consociations.

There is no appeal from the determination pronounced by a Council of the consociated churches in a district, to any other council or judicature. Yet if the matter brought before the Council of any district shall be judged so great in the nature of it, or so doubtful in the issue, or of such general concern, that the said Council shall judge best that it be referred to a fuller council, then they shall invite to their aid the churches of the other Consociation, within the same county, (or of the next adjoining Consociation of another county, if there be not two Consociations in the county, where the difficulty ariseth,) and the fuller Council of those two adjoining Consociations, shall hear, judge, determine, and finally issue such case according to the word of God. (Sayb. Art. VII.)

XI. Proceedings when the Church refuses to abide by the judgment of the Council.

1. If any pastor and church doth obstinately refuse a due attendance, and conformity to the determination of the Council that hath the cognizance of the case and determineth it as above, after due patience used,

they shall be reputed guilty of scandalous contempt. (Sayb. Art. VI.)

2. Such pastor and church, are to be dealt with as the rule of God's word doth provide, i. e. following the analogy of the rule, given by Christ, in Matthew, XVIII; 15, 16, 17. (Sayb. Art. VI.)

3. If the offending church and pastor refuse to hear the admonition of the consociated churches, expressed by the Council, then, after due patience, the sentence of non-communion shall be declared against such pastor and church. And the churches of the district, are severally to approve of the said sentence, by withdrawing from the communion of the pastor and church which so refuseth to be healed. (Sayb. Art VI. See also above, Part I. Art. II. § 2.)

XII. Select Councils.

1. The right of a church to ask advice of any other churches in cases of difficulty is not taken away by our ecclesiastical confederation; but no matter should be brought before a select council after it has once been determined in the Council of the Consociation, while it is competent for the Consociation, when orderly called thereto, to review a mat-

ter which has been previously passed upon by a select council.

2. In Litchfield South, if it be requested by any offender when prosecuted in any particular church, he or she shall have a right, (by the consent of the church,) to an advisory council, to be mutually chosen by any such church and offender, previous to the decision of the church; or by mutual consent such case may be immediately referred to the Council of the Consociation.

3. The result of a select council should be entered upon the records of the church, and it is wisely required in some of the Consociations that a certified copy of the result be deposited with their Registrar to be kept on file or copied in a book for reference.

4. No aggrieved party in a consociated church has a right in any case to call an *ex parte* council, for the redress of grievances; no church is required to comply with such a call, or to attend to the advice of such a council;—our ecclesiastical confederation having provided a more excellent way.

PART THIRD.

OF PARTICULAR ASSOCIATIONS.

I. Membership in the Association.

1. The teaching elders of the churches in each county or district become an Association by their own consent and covenant. (Sayb. Art. XII.) He who consents to become a teaching elder in a consociated church, consents to become a member of the Association, but does not become actually a member, till the Associated Pastors, upon their satisfaction of his fitness, consent, either formally or informally, to receive him.

2. Ordained ministers of the gospel, having no pastoral relation to a church, but exercising their ministry within the bounds of an Association, either as teachers in a theological school, or as supplying a congregation statedly with the ministration of the word, ought to be in connection with the Association of the district within which they reside, and become such by mutual consent.

3. A minister dismissed from his pastoral charge, and still exercising his ministry occasionally, does not cease to be a member of

the Association, but is under their fraternal inspection in all that concerns his ministerial character, and may sit in their meetings to aid with his advice and vote.

4. A minister ordained to the work of an evangelist, whether as a missionary to foreign parts, or to labor among the destitute at home, ought to be connected with some Association, till such time as it shall be convenient for him to be united with some other body.

II. Duties of the Association.

The duties of the Associated Pastors in each county or division of a county, are

1. To consult the duties of their office and the common interest of the churches by carefully inquiring, at least twice in each year, into the state of religion in their respective charges. (Sayb. Art. XII.)

2. To send delegates each year (according to some fixed ratio) to the General Association (Sayb. Art XV), and likewise an authentic report of the state of religion in that district.

3. To act upon such matters as may be referred to them by the General Association, as the nomination of delegates to corresponding bodies.

4. To consider and resolve questions and cases of importance which shall be offered by

any among themselves or others. (Sayb. Art. XII.)

5. To examine candidates for the ministry, and by certificate of approbation, (commonly called a license,) to recommend to the churches such as they find to be duly qualified: (Sayb. Art. XII.)

6. To recommend to bereaved churches, on their application for advice, such persons as may be fit to be called and settled in the work of the Gospel ministry among them: (Sayb. Art. XIV.)

7. To take notice of any among themselves that may be accused of scandal or heresy unto them, or of scandal or heresy cognizable by them; to examine the matter carefully; and, if they find just occasion, to direct to the calling of the Council of the consociated churches of the district, that such offenders may be duly proceeded against before the Council. (Sayb. Art. XIII.)

III. Officers of the Association.

1. A Moderator and a Scribe are chosen annually in Fairfield East, Hartford Central, Hartford Fourth, New Haven Central and Tolland: in other associations at each meeting.

2. Each Association has its Registrar, who records its proceedings and takes charge of its books, papers and moneys. In some Associations this office is merged in that of Scribe.

IV. Meetings of the Association.

1. The Associations all have an annual meeting in May or June, at which they make preparations for the meeting of the General Association. New Haven West and Windham Associations have likewise a meeting in the autumn. Hartford Central and North meet quarterly;—Hartford Fourth and New Haven Central, monthly;—Hartford South, every other month. In these cases there is a combination of literary and theological exercises with the peculiar work of the associations. The other Associations are considered as virtually meeting during the annual meeting of the Consociation. (Saybr. Art. XII.)

2. Special meetings are called by letters missive from the Moderator of the last meeting at the request of two (or, in some Associations, *three*) members. In case of the death or disability of the Moderator, any two members (*four* in Litchfield North) may call a special meeting. In New London Association, a special meeting is called, in case of the

Moderator's death or disability, by the last preceding Moderator.

3. The letters, which call a special meeting, state the business for which the meeting is convened; and in accordance with a principle of natural justice, it is commonly understood that no business is to be taken up at a special meeting, other than that of which the letters missive have given due notice.

V. The examination and recommendation of candidates for the Ministry.*

1. Each Association has its own rules in respect to the time which a candidate must have devoted to the study of theology before examination; but generally, in compliance with a recommendation of the General Association, the candidate for examination must have spent at least two years in theological

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* N. B. The General Association in 1860 at Rockville, having been informed that sundry pulpits among their churches were occupied on the Lord's Day for public preaching by persons without commendation as competent for such service by any Association of pastors or other proper body,—"*resolved*, that we, in General Association, do express our disapprobation of this irregularity, and warn the churches against employing any man as a public preacher of the divine word, unless accredited by a formal certificate of his examination and approval by some ordained body of Christian pastors and teachers."

studies, and must have a competent knowledge of the arts and sciences.

2. The certificate of approbation, or license to preach, confers on the candidate no ecclesiastical rank or authority. He is not a minister, but only a candidate for the ministry, approved by the Associated Pastors, and permitted to preach for the trial of his gifts. His certificate of approbation may therefore be revoked whenever the Association shall see cause.

3. The certificate of approbation is ordinarily given only for the term of four years, at the end of which period, it may be renewed at the request of the candidate.

4. A candidate presenting himself to a council, or any other ecclesiastical body, for ordination, does not need a formal dismission from the Association which gave him license to preach. His ordination terminates his connection with that Association; and he is to enter into new relations, not as a candidate, but as a minister.*

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* In the Presbyterian church, a license to preach is given by a presbytery; and all ordinations are also performed by presbyteries. The licentiate is "under the care" of the presbytery by which he was licensed, and cannot be ordained by another presbytery, without being first, by a special dismission and recommendation, released from his former relation, and placed "under the care" of that other presbytery. In the Congregational communion,

VI. Proceedings against a Minister charged with scandal or heresy.

1. An offending brother in the Association is to be first dealt with privately, according to the rules of Christ in Matt. XVIII. 15, 16.

2. When the accused brother is a pastor of a consociated church, the Association is to inquire whether the charge is of such a nature, in respect to the matter alleged, and of so much probability in respect to the grounds on which it rests, as to require a trial; and then, if they see cause, they are to direct to the calling of a Council of the Consociated churches, where such offenders may be duly proceeded against. (Sayb. Art. XIII).

3. When the accused brother is pastor of a church not Consociated, the Association, having found upon inquiry sufficient cause to proceed against him, may bring the matter to

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no man begins to preach without being first examined and approved by an Association of ministers; and in imitation of Presbyterian usage, the approbation is called a license, and the candidate is called a licentiate. But the Association by which candidates are licensed, is not the body by which ministers are ordained; and therefore an Association knows nothing about dismissing a licentiate in order to his ordination. The license is itself a sufficient dismission and recommendation to any ordaining body to whom it may be presented, and is valid for the term of four years from its date, unless otherwise limited in express terms.

Presbyterians have sometimes been perplexed in consequence of not understanding this distinction.

the church of which he is pastor; and that church may call to its aid, as in the case of the ordination of its pastor, a select council of neighboring churches.

4. When the accused brother is not a pastor of any church, and is not by some special rule amenable to the Consociation, or when being pastor of a church not consociated, that church refuses to submit the charges againt him to a proper council, the Association may proceed to investigate the truth of the charges, and if they find him guilty of any scandal or heresy for which he ought to be deposed from the ministry, they may expel him from their fellowship, and declare him to be no longer in communion with them, as a minister of Christ.

5. When a minister of the Gospel, residing or performing the work of the ministry among our churches, but not connected with the Association as a member, is charged with scandal or heresy, it is the duty of the Association to examine the matter as in the case of one of their own members, and (if they find just occasion,) to present the matter to the proper ecclesiastical authority, with which the accused is directly connected. But if it be not known, that the individual is connected with any ecclesiastical body competent to try the case,—or if he be connected with an ecclesiastical body too distant to act

seasonably and intelligently upon the matters alledged,—or if the ecclesiastical body with which he is connected, refuse to do what is required by the laws of Christ, the purity of the ministry, and the safety of the churches, —then the Association may proceed to investigate the charges, and finding him guilty of any scandal or heresy for which he ought to be deposed from the ministry, may declare him to be out of this fellowship, and may warn the churches against him as a deceiver.

PART FOURTH.

OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION.

I. Constitution.

1. The General Association consists of delegates from the several particular Associations of Connecticut, and these only vote in its meetings. (Saybr. Art. XV.)

2. According to usage, each particular Association sends a delegate for every six members resident in Connecticut; yet every Association, however small, sends three delegates. It is recommended that one delegate at least from each Association be of the num-

ber of those who attended the General Association of the preceding year.

3. The General Association receives delegates from the bodies with which it is in stipulated correspondence. These delegates assist in the deliberations and debates, and in the committees appointed for the dispatch of business. (Appendix A.)

4. The Registrar, the Statistical Secretary, and the minister with whom the General Association meets, are honorary members *ex officiis.*

5. The objects, for which the General Association meets, are to learn the general state of religion,—to promote unity and order in ecclesiastical affairs, and to recommend to the district Associations such matters and things as they shall apprehend will be for the general welfare.

6. The General Association has no legislative or judicial power over ministers or churches. It is only a meeting for consultation and advice, and for coöperation in the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

II. Meetings.

1. The General Association meets from year to year within the several districts in

alphabetical order, beginning in 1861 with Fairfield East Association.

2. The General Association for each year meets at the place appointed by the General Association of the preceding year, on the third Tuesday of June at 11 o'clock *ante meridiem.*

3. The Registrar, the Statistical Secretary, and the minister with whom the Association meets, are a committee on credentials, who receive the certificates of delegates and enroll the names of all who are duly certified, previous to the hour of meeting. As soon after that time as they find twenty-five persons present, the minister with whom the Association meets, or in his absence the Registrar, or in the absence of both, the Statistical Secretary, calls them to order, and leads them to the choice of a Scribe; provided however that they need not delay the opening of the Association more than one hour.

4. The Scribe leads the members to the choice of a Moderator, and the Moderator to the choice of an Assistant Scribe.

5. The Moderator, after the roll has been revised and perfected, opens the Association with prayer: he also opens and closes the Association each day with prayer, except at the termination of the session, when he may request some other person to pray.

6. The Moderator has power, upon application of any district Association, to convene the General Association, and likewise, in case of necessity, to alter the appointed place of annual meeting; of both which he must cause due notice to be given by the Registrar in the newspapers.

III. Committees, Officers and Preachers.

1. As soon as the Association is opened, a Committee of Overtures and Nominations is chosen by ballot to prepare the business of the Association; and no business shall be entertained without unanimous consent, which has not been previously laid before this committee, excepting always such matters as shall be contained in the docket prepared by the Registrar.

When any other committee is to be appointed, the nomination of it shall be the duty of this committee, unless it shall be otherwise ordered at the time.

2. A Financial Committee is appointed to audit the accounts of the Treasurer, to report the state of the treasury, and to propose a suitable tax to be paid by the members of the several district Associations.

3. A Committee on the state of Religion is appointed to receive the reports on the state

of religion from the several particular Associations, and to draw up a general narrative to be adopted by the General Association. The reports from the several districts are to be forwarded, previous to the time of meeting, to the Registrar of the General Association, and at the close of the session are to be deposited with the Registrar.

4. A Committee on Delegations to corresponding bodies is appointed to receive and report the nominations made by particular Associations, of delegates to corresponding bodies, and to supply any failure in the nominations.

5. The General Association has its Registrar, or keeper of records, in whose hands the minutes of each meeting are placed by the Scribe, to be copied into a book for future reference. He gives suitable notice of the time and place of each meeting of the Association,—prepares a docket of the annual business and of the matters laid over by the previous General Association, to be presented immediately after the appointment of the Committee of Overtures and Nominations,—and is prepared at all times to furnish from the records any information they may afford to aid the better transaction of business. He is entitled to payment of all the expenses incurred by him in the transaction of his official business.

6. The General Association appoints annually by ballot a Statistical Secretary and Treasurer, who, with assistants whom he appoints in the particular Associations, collects the statistical reports of the churches, and also the taxes levied by the General Association, superintends the printing of the minutes, and makes report annually of his receipts and disbursements, as likewise of other matters relative to his work. He receives, besides his expenses, a compensation fixed by the General Association.

7. The General Association appoints annually four persons as "Trustees of the Everest Fund," and they report annually their own doings and the condition of the fund committed to their charge. (Appendix B.)

8. The General Association appoints annually by ballot six clergymen and six brethren of the churches to be Trustees of the "Missionary Society of Connecticut,"—also a Treasurer and Auditor for the same Society, and these officers report annually to the General Association. (Appendix C.)

9. The General Association appoints annually by ballot five clergymen and one layman to be, with the twelve Trustees named above, Directors of the "Missionary Society of Connecticut, auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society," and these directors re-

port annually to the General Association. (Appendix D.)

10. The General Association appoints annually a preacher, on nomination of the association within whose bounds it is assembled, to deliver a *concio ad clerum* at Yale College during the Commencement week following, on a subject selected the year previous by the General Association.

11. The General Association on the first day of its session attends public worship, at which a sermon is preached by some member of the Association within whose bounds the General Association met the year but one previous,—the preacher being selected by his own Association,—and on the second day of its session unites with the church where it meets, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. (Appendix E.)

IV. Rules of Order.

1. Each morning, at the time to which the Association is adjourned, the Moderator shall open the meeting with prayer, and the Scribe shall call the roll of members and read the minutes of the preceding day, that any needful correction may be made.

2. The Moderator shall preserve order and decorum in the body; and when he speaks to

the merits of any question, he shall leave the chair and address the Scribe.

3. In case of an equal division of votes, the Moderator shall have a casting vote.

4. Whilst the Moderator is putting any question or addressing the body, no one shall walk out of or across the house ;—nor in such case, or when a member is speaking, shall entertain private discourse or read any printed book or paper; nor, whilst a member is speaking, shall pass between him and the chair.

5. When any member in debating or otherwise, shall transgress the rules of the body, the Moderator shall by his own authority, or at the request of any member, call him to order; and if a question shall arise concerning his being in order, it shall be decided by an appeal to the body.

6. No member shall withdraw from the body, until the close of the session, without leave first obtained from the Moderator.

7. Every member, when he wishes to speak, shall address the Moderator; and when two or more rise at once, the Moderator shall name the member who is first to speak.

8. No member shall speak more than twice to the merits of the question in debate, except by special permission of the body; nor more than once until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

9. Every motion, except for adjournment,

shall be reduced to writing, if the Moderator or any two members desire it.

10. No motion, committed to writing, shall be finally decided upon, until it shall have had three several readings, if any member require it.

11. When a motion is regularly made and seconded, and has been stated by the Moderator, it cannot be withdrawn or modified by the mover, without the consent of the body.

12. No vote can be reconsidered, except on the day of its passage or the next succeeding, and on motion of one who voted with the majority, and at a full meeting of the Association.

13. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, but to adjourn, to lay on the table, for the previous question, to postpone to a day certain, to commit, to amend, to postpone indefinitely, which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged. On a motion for adjournment, for laying on the table, for indefinite postponement or for the previous question there shall be no debate.

14. The effect of a negative of the previous question is to allow further debate and the issue of the subject in due order;—the effect of adopting the previous question is to put an end to debate and to bring the asso-

ciation to a direct vote, upon pending amendments, if any, and then upon the original question.

15. If a question under debate contains several parts, any member may have it divided, and the question taken on eah part.

16. Every committee shall consist of three members, unless expressly ordered otherwise by the body.

17. If three or more members object to the appointment of a committee by nomination, the committee shall be chosen by ballot.

18. If the report of a committee contains nothing more than matters of fact for information, or matters of argument for the consideration of the Association, the question is, *Shall the report be accepted?* and that question, unless superseded by a motion to reject, to recommit, to postpone or to lay upon the table, shall be taken without debate. Such a report, if accepted, is placed upon the files of the Association, but not being an act of the Association, is not entered on the minutes.

If the report is in the form of a vote or resolution, or of a declaration, expressing the judgment or testimony of the Association, the additional question arises, *Shall the report be adopted?*—and motions for amendment are in order. Such a report, if adopted, with or

without amendment, is the act of the Association, and is entered on the minutes.

If a report gives the views of the committee on the matter referred to them, and terminates with the form of a resolution or declaration in the name of the Association, the adoption of the report is the adoption only of the resolution or declaration; and while the report at large is placed on file, that part of it, which has become the act of the Association, is entered on the minutes.

On the report of a Treasurer, of a Board of Trustees or Directors, or of a Committee or other agent empowered to act for the Association, the question is, *Shall the report be accepted and approved?* which question may be divided, if a division is called for.

19. These rules of order shall be read at the opening of every session of the General Association.

V. Amendments.

A motion to alter or annul any of the foregoing rules of the General Association shall not pass into a vote, unless it receive the votes of two thirds of the members present on the day after that on which the motion was first made.

No rule shall be temporarily suspended, except by the concurrence of two thirds of the members of the body.

APPENDIX.

A.—The first arrangement for an interchange of delegates was made with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the year 1792, and in 1794 it was resolved (on the proposal of that body) that the delegates have a perfect equality of rights in debating and suffrage. A similar agreement was entered into with the General Convention of Vermont in 1802,—with the General Association of Massachusetts in 1809 and with the General Association of New Hampshire in 1810. This system of correspondence was by degrees widely extended.

In 1861 the following preamble and resolution were adopted by the General Association:—

"Whereas it was formerly stipulated, in the terms of union between this General Association and the bodies with which it has entered into correspondence, that the delegates from each body should be entitled not only to deliberate but to vote in the meetings of the other;—

And whereas this right of voting on the part of delegates from corresponding bodies has gone into disuse by general consent; and some of the bodies with which we are in correspondence have by express regulation limited the right of voting in their meetings to their own members; therefore

Resolved, That till some remonstrance or complaint shall arise from some of our corresponding bodies, the understanding in the General Association of Connecticut is that only the delegates from the district Associations in Connecticut vote in our meetings."

B.—Dr. Solomon Everest of Canton, died April 3, 1822, and Amelia Everest, his wife, died October 22, 1843; each of them leaving a will giving one fourth part of their residuary estate to be applied for the purchase of Bibles, religious tracts, &c., for distribution, for the support of domestic missions in this state, or the education of indigent pious youth for the Gospel ministry; to any, or all, of the above purposes, as shall be thought most expedient by a committee which the General Association of the State shall, from time to time, appoint for that purpose.

The bequests of the above donors were:—

From the estate of Solomon Everest,	$4,133.48
From the estate of Amelia Everest,	3,100.70

The said Fund was managed by committees appointed by the General Association until May, 1847, when the two bequests were consolidated, and an act of incorporation passed by the Legislature of Connecticut, constituting the Trustees, who were then appointed, and who should thereafter be appointed by the General Association, a body politic and corporate by the name of the "Trustees of the Everest Fund."

The principal of the Fund has been kept good, —the income being appropriated from year to year by the Trustees, who hold an annual meeting on the first Monday of September.

C.—The General Association began to take measures for prosecuting missions to the new and frontier settlements of the country as early as the year 1774. These measures were systematized in 1798 by forming the "Missionary Society of Connecticut." This Society was incorporated in 1802 by the legislature of Connecticut; and, in conformity with the act of incorporation, the Trustees make a report of their receipts and expenditures annually to the legislature.

For many years this Society received annual contributions from the churches of Connecticut, and in various ways, especially by the income of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, acquired a Permanent Fund of $30,000. In 1830 it agreed to relinquish contributions from the churches, and to confine itself to the income of its Permanent Fund, together with such donations and bequests as might from time to time be made to the Society. Its Constitution is as follows:

ART. I. This society shall be known by the name of *The Missionary Society* of Connecticut.

ART. II. The General Association of the state of Connecticut shall be the said Missionary Society.

ART. III. The General Association shall annually by ballot appoint twelve Trustees, whereof six shall be cler-

gymen and six shall be brethren of the churches, who shall conduct the business of the society in the manner hereafter described.

Art. IV. The object of this Society shall be to christianize the heathen in North America, and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United Sates, and both shall be pursued as circumstances shall point out, and as the Trustees under the superintendence of the General Association shall direct.

Art. V. The General Association and the Trustees shall adopt such measures, from time to time, for raising funds, as they shall judge expedient.

Art. VI. The Trustees shall have power to apply the funds of the society according to their discretion, in all cases in which they shall not be limited by the General Association or by the donors. They shall correspond with other missionary societies; shall have power to appoint and dismiss missionaries, to pay them, and generally to transact all business necessary to attain the ends of the society; and shall be paid their necessary expenses, but nothing for their services.

Art. VII. The Trustees shall annually appoint a Secretary, who shall keep a fair account of their procedings. They shall also appoint a Chairman, who, with four of the Trustees, shall be a quorum to transact business; or if the stated Chairman shall not be present, any seven of the trustees shall be a quorum.

Art. VIII. The Chairman shall have power to call a meeting of the Trustees at his discretion, by letters left with them, or at the houses of their residence; and it shall be his duty to call such meeting whenever requested by two of the Trustees; and in case of the death of the

Chairman, or of his absence from the state, any two Trustees are hereby empowered to call a meeting.

ART. IX. The General Association shall annually appoint a Treasurer and an Auditor of accounts; and the Treasurer shall exhibit both to the General Association and to the Trustees, the state of the treasury, whenever he shall be called upon for that purpose.

ART. X. The Trustees shall annually exhibit to the General Association a particular account of the missionaries employed by them; of the places to which they are sent; of the missions; of the state of the funds; of the receipts and expenditures: and of whatever relating to this institution the General Association shall require.

ART. XI. The Trustees and all officers of this society shall enter on their respective offices on the first Wednesday of August, annually; and shall continue in office for one year.

ART. XII. The Trustees shall hold their first meeting at the State House in Hartford, on the first Wednesday of August next, at 11 o'clock A.M., and in every year thereafter they shall meet at the same time and place, unless otherwise ordered by the General Association.

ART. XIII. If on experience it shall be found necessary to alter the Constitution, an alteration may be made by the General Association at their stated session; but not without having been drawn up in writing and lying under consideration one year; nor unless at least two thirds of the General Association shall adopt said alteration.

The following additional article was adopted by vote of the society and approved by the legislature, in the year 1805:

Voted, that it shall be the duty of the Trustees of this

Society, to place the Treasurer under bonds for the faithful discharge of his trust, and to such an amount as they shall think proper. And in case such Treasurer shall refuse to give bonds as aforesaid, it shall be in their power to displace him, and appoint one in his place, who will qualify himself for the trust; who shall continue in office, till the next meeting of the General Association.

D.—The General Association in 1816 formed a "Domestic Missionary Society,"—the object being to build up the waste places in Connecticut and its vicinity.

In 1830–1 this Society became auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society, under the following revised Constitution.

ART. I. This Society shall be known by the name of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society.

ART. II. The General Association of Connecticut shall be said Society.

ART. III. The object of the Society shall be to co-operate with the A. H. M. S. in building up the waste places of Connecticut, and in sending the Gospel to the destitute, and assisting feeble congregations in other and more destitute portions of the United States, according to the provisions of the 8th Article of the constitution of the parent society, with such stipulations as shall secure to this society the control of the raising and application of funds, the selection and appointment of missionaries, and the general designation of their fields of labor; the said stipulations to be mutually agreed upon by the directors of the society, and the executive committee of the A. H. M. S.

ART. IV. The officers of the Society shall be, a Secretary, a Treasurer, an Auditor, and eighteen Directors. The Treasurer and Auditor of the Missionary Society of Connecticut shall be, *ex officio*, Treasurer and Auditor of this Society. The twelve Trustees of The Missionary Society of Connecticut shall be, *ex officio*, Directors of this Society. Six additional Directors shall be annually chosen by ballot by the General Association. The Secretary shall be chosen by the Directors. Seven of the Directors shall be laymen, and eleven clergymen.

ART. V. The Treasurer shall pay out the money of the Society only as ordered by the Directors, and shall exhibit a statement of his accounts to the Board whenever called on for the purpose.

ART. VI. It shall be the duty of the Directors, five of whom shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for business, to pursue the object of the Society by adopting such measures, from time to time, as they shall judge expedient, under the superintendence of the General Association, and subject to their special direction, should it, at any time, be thought proper to apply to the General Assembly for a brief.

ART. VII. The Directors shall have power to apply the funds of the Society according to their discretion, in all cases in which they shall not be limited by the General Association, or the donors; to appoint and dismiss missionaries; to pay them; and generally, to transact all business necessary to attain the ends of the Society. And no officer of the Society, the Treasurer excepted, shall receive any compensation for his services.*

* The last clause of this article was erased in June, 1832.

Art. VIII. The Board of Directors shall meet twice a year; on such day of the week of the state election, at Hartford, as they shall appoint, and on the first Wednesday of August. The Board of Directors shall annually report their doings to the General Association.

Art. IX. A permanent fund may be formed, consisting of donations of individuals, if the donations are made with that particular view; but all other moneys of the Society shall be appropriated from year to year, to the attainment of the ends of the Society.

Art. X. No alterations shall be made in this Constitution, unless the same shall have been proposed at a previous annual meeting, or recommended by the Directors and adopted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the General Association present.

E.—Various benevolent societies have been accustomed to present the objects for which they labor, annually before the General Association. The Connecticut Branch of the American Education Society, formed in 1826, holds its annual meeting in connection with the meeting of the General Association, and its constitution provides that the members of the General Association for the time being shall be members of said Branch, in addition to the annual donors and the Life Members. The Branch has its own officers, and has at its disposal, subject to the rules of the American Education Society, the income (about $480) of certain scholarships founded by friends of the cause in Connecticut.

SUPPLEMENT ADDED IN 1862.

Definition of the terms ACTING PASTOR *and* STATED PREACHER, *as determined by the General Association at Norwalk in* 1862.

1. When an ordained minister in recognized communion with the associated pastors of Connecticut, is employed by the concurrent votes of the church and the ecclesiastical society, for a period of not less than one year, to perform the work of the ministry in that parish, such minister shall be designated in the minutes and statistics of the General Association as "acting pastor."

2. When a preacher of the Gospel, ordained or regularly approbated, being in communion with the associated pastors of Connecticut, is employed by an ecclesiastical society to preach statedly to the congregation, for a period of not less than four months, such preacher shall be designated in the minutes and statistics as "stated preacher."

3. When a congregation has neither a pastor, nor an acting pastor, nor a stated preacher, the fact shall be indicated in the minutes and statistics by the word "none" in the column of ministers.

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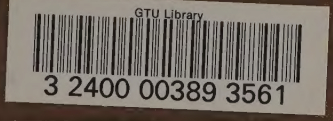

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